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PHYSICAL DEGENERACY

OF THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE:

SHOWING THAT AN

IMPERFECT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION,

AND

ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN,

Are among the Chief Causes of this Degeneracy.

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TAKEN FROM A SERIES OF ARTICLES WRITTEN FOR, AND NOW BEING PUBLISHED  
IN, THE DETROIT TRIBUNE, OVER THE SIGNATURE OF "E."

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Published for gratuitous circulation, by the friends of a Reform of our present School System; or  
by those desirous of having attention paid to the Physical and Moral, as well as  
Intellectual, Education,—by substituting active out-door exercises, and  
Gymnastic Training, a portion of the time, for the present  
tedious and destructive in-door confinement.

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## PREFACE.

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In writing the articles for The Tribune, which are contained in this small pamphlet, the writer had but one object in view, and that was, to call the attention of our citizens to the importance of improving our present school system. Are physical development, health, life and the morals of our children of so little consequence, when compared with intellectual education, that we can afford to sacrifice all to the latter? Let parents look at the slender bodies, pale faces and decaying teeth of their children; watch their capricious appetites, their throbbing and aching heads, and loss of strength, when confined six hours a day in school, and then say if there is no need of a change.

Why should our school system remain so far behind that of Sweden and many of the schools of Germany and Russia? Surely this need not be. It is from the want of reflection. Parents do not realize that they are denying their children the conditions which are essential for growth, health and life, both physical and moral, and wonder that their children are delicate, sickly and depraved.

Parents, please read this pamphlet carefully through, and then hand it to your neighbors, if they have not seen it. It costs you nothing. It has been paid for, and sent to your door, by the friends of your children; and if it shall be the means of exciting in you a desire to do your duty to your little ones, it will have accomplished the end for which it was written and is circulated.



Written for the Detroit Tribune.

## PHYSICAL DEGENERACY OF AMERICANS.

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MR. EDITOR—I noticed in your paper of April 1st, an article on this subject. If it is true, that the people of the United States are physically deteriorating, it would seem that the subject should command the serious attention of every patriot and philanthropist, to say nothing of the Christian portion of the community. With what force the subject appeals to the latter, will be evident if we bear in mind that men and races of men do not deteriorate, physically, without a cause. If it is true, that, while we are justly pitying the poor benighted heathen nations on earth, and are spending our money and the lives of philanthropic men, to send them knowledge, we are ourselves being slowly and surely destroyed as a race, through a lack of knowledge of the physical laws of our being, or still worse, wilfully violating known laws—how much more do we need the active labors of efficient missionaries at home.

That the people of the United States are deteriorating, is in accordance with the testimony of travelers who have been among the nations of Europe, from which ours has sprung; and its truth can be very easily confirmed by comparing our citizens with the foreign emigrants who flock to our shores. We shall find the emigrant more robust, hardy, and firmly built; and that this is not simply an external appearance, will be manifest if we carefully compare the different structures of the body. Even if we descend from the most delicate to the very bones: Compare the teeth, if you please, of foreigners, with the teeth of Americans, and you will find the most surprising deterioration in the latter. Tooth-ache, decayed teeth, and toothless gums, are far more common; nor is this all, for even the very jaws themselves will be found more perfectly developed in foreigners than in Americans; the former having, usually, 32 teeth and room for them in the jaws,—but the latter, in a far greater number of cases, are compelled to lose four teeth, one on each side of each jaw, or to have them crowded and deformed. Here, then, we see that the most solid structures of the

body are degenerating; and how much more manifestly the more delicate structures are deteriorating, may be seen in the delicate and slender form of the body, attenuated face, and expression of the countenance. It is not necessary that a man or a race of men should be large in order to be well built and healthy. Why do we have all this deterioration of our race in the United States? We are told by some, that it is the effect of the climate. If this were true, there would be little or no prospect of its being remedied; but I shall endeavor to prove that it is not true—that the Lord has not permitted one race of people to be swept off from this broad continent and another to take its place, and yet the latter not capable of taking the place of the former residents. I think that it can be easily shown, that there are actual evils of life, voluntarily indulged in, (notwithstanding all the lights of science and the gospel,) either one of which is doing more—yes, many times more, towards destroying our American people, than all the effects of climate. I have no hesitation in asserting, that climate has comparatively very little to do with causing the delicate, deformed, nervous, dyspeptic and consumptive race of men and women we see around us. Abundant evidence of the truth of this is to be found in the very simple fact, that our females do not enjoy as good health, and are not proportionally as hardy and robust as our males—showing conclusively that the causes are more active among them than among the males; and yet climate affects both alike. Again, pass over into Canada, beyond immediate contact with our people, and we shall find that the writer in the “Atlantic Monthly” states the truth, when he says, that “certainly no one can visit Canada without being struck with the spectacle of a more athletic race than our own. On every side one sees rosy female faces and noble manly forms,” even in the latitude of Detroit, central New York and New England.

Is there anything in the atmosphere of our republic, which is inconsistent with symmetry of form, substantial structures and physical health? If there is we had better forthwith change our form of government. But no! the causes of this degeneracy are to be found deep within the human soul; in the perversion of God-given faculties, and the resulting vanity, sensualism and miserly selfishness of the day, which ultimate themselves in the neglect and ill-treatment of our children, and in the violation of physical laws, and consequent deformity and disease.

With your leave, Mr. Editor, I propose to point out, with a gentle hand, some of the causes of this physical degeneracy, in a series of articles for your paper; and if, without much ceremony, I may chance to expose some of the cancerous ulcers of our present social fabric, you



will pardon me, as I shall have but one end in view, and that will be to expose them in the light of reason, that the proper remedies may be the more effectually pressed home to the consciences of our citizens, that our race may be saved from dwindling away; our men saved from destruction by dissipation, which is so fearfully prevalent among the young; our ladies from spinal distortion and irritation, neuralgia, hysteria, and female diseases; and that our children may be saved from an untimely grave. As the violation of natural laws commences at the cradle—or even before our children are born, but I forbear—I propose to review some of the shortcomings of our present system of education.

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#### AN IMPERFECT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION, ONE OF THE CHIEF CAUSES OF THIS DEGENERACY.

It requires no argument to show that the most important duty and use which men and women have to perform in this world, is to train and properly educate their children; and society has no higher duty to perform, and none more important, so far as the welfare and preservation of our race is concerned, than to look after and care for the rising generation.

The young of the animal kingdom, beneath man, are born into all the science, or receive by perception or instinct, all the knowledge which is necessary for their preservation and happiness, and are capable of but a very limited and imperfect improvement; but the young child, although more ignorant and helpless than the young of the brute creation, possesses the capacity for endless improvement, both intellectually and morally; and into the hands of parents, guardians, and society, is given the responsibility of training up the young immortal in the way he should go, that when he is old he need not depart from it. It becomes us, in view of the physical suffering, mental depravity and ignorance, which we so generally witness around us, even among the young, to inquire how we are discharging our duty to the rising generation; and no time could be more suitable than the present, when the selfish pursuits of men have received a check, and the attention of the community is so generally turned to the subject of christianity. True religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to

do good from the love of the good and the true. We have a right to expect that men and women will more earnestly desire to know their duty, and strive to do it in all the relations of life.

But before we can understand how a child should be trained and educated, it is necessary that we have some knowledge of the being we are to educate. First, then, man has, while he lives here, a natural body, which is given him that he may live in this world a life of usefulness, and in due time, that his spirit, which is within the physical body, and gives life to it, may be prepared for a better world. Now the fact that man has a physical body, is almost entirely ignored in our present system of education and juvenile training, and most fearful are the consequences to our race. A more fatal mistake could scarcely be made; better, far better, that the intellect should be neglected; but we will let this rest for the present. Man, spiritually *may*, *be* divided into the will which is the seat of the loves, and the understanding, which is the seat of the intellectual and rational faculties. We will leave to phrenologists and metaphysicians to subdivide these two great departments of man's spiritual nature, as they may see fit.

The affections or loves flow forth into the understanding, and are there clothed, and assume definite forms as thoughts,—clothed from knowledges which have been derived from the senses; we can sit in judgment on our thoughts, and resist them, or carry them out into action when we deem it expedient, and it is this ability to *will* to do or not to do, which, together with reason, elevates man above the brute creation.

Does any one question that man is responsible for his acts? How otherwise can we account for the present fallen state of our race? Every youth has a clear perception that he has freedom of will; external circumstances may often prevent him from carrying out his designs, but he can harbor them, and have the will to do in spite of circumstances. The dealing of man with man, and our entire system of government, are founded upon the assumption that man has such freedom, and is therefore responsible to society for his acts, so long as he is a sane man. In fact, upon this very point, in a great measure, turns the question of man's sanity or insanity. The insane man has not, for the time being, such freedom, and therefore we do not hold him responsible for his acts.

The light of perception flows into man from the Lord, the Sun of Heaven, and the very moment we close our eyes to that light, and call it in question, that moment we plunge into mental darkness on that subject. Therefore, if we call in question our mental freedom, after having perceived that we have freedom of will, and by the un-



guided and educated, than it is that the intellect should be stored with the knowledges taught in the schools, for the affections compose the very substance of man's spirit, and upon their right development depends man's happiness here and hereafter. Yet this all important department of man's spirit is neglected almost entirely, in our present system of education. This is by far the most pernicious and destructive mistake which could be made. It is bad enough to neglect or destroy the body, but it is worse to neglect or destroy the spirit within the body. By simply cultivating the intellect, we may store the memory with knowledges which have no relation to life, and which,

article, it is, and as every observer can see, is the case in the United States. It is very difficult to satisfy some individuals, who witness the increase of knowledge among the masses, that men are not physically and morally improving, or progressing. In fact, not a few believe that our race has always been progressing, from the time of the very first creation of man on earth. But that man has degenerated upon the earth, it seems to me, must be manifest to all who are capable of reflecting, if they are not blinded by the theories of progress, so prevalent among those who worship nature instead of God. Revelation teaches us that God created man upright, but that man has sought out



many inventions. In other words, our race has fallen from the state of purity and innocence which existed in the golden age, when man stood forth in the garden of Eden, the image and likeness of his Creator. To me nothing is more irrational than the supposition that man has not fallen, but that he has always been progressing.

Man is not a creature of chance or blind nature, for we behold even in his fallen state, abundant traces of the handy workmanship of an intelligent, all wise and merciful Creator, and to suppose that man when he came from the hands of such a being, and was pronounced by him "very good," was the poor, miserable, sinful being we behold him to-day—spiritually with his affections perverted, and his intellectual horizon full of every variety of unclean thoughts—is to suppose that God is directly the author of evil, or that a good tree can bring forth evil fruit. I ask the reader if it is possible that man could have been created the poor, diseased, broken down object we see him now; even his body, full of hereditary tendency to the development of scrofula, cancer, consumption and insanity, which are so common, to say nothing of the specimens of puny and delicate organization which we so generally witness around us? Is it possible that the time has never been, when the inhabitants of our earth were in the possession of better physical organizations than they are now?

How few strictly healthy men can be found in our land. Can you find one entirely free from disease, free from pain and suffering, from the cradle to the grave, whose lamp of physical life goes out gently like the setting of the summer's sun, or the closing of the eyes of the innocent babe in quiet slumber? Such would be the life of a truly healthy man, and such the *only natural* death. But alas! how far from this is the sad reality we witness around us in the present life of man. Behold the innocent babe suffering and dying in its mother's arms, perchance amid contortions and convulsions terrible to witness. Behold the prattling child, the playful boy or girl, the youth, the middle-aged and the old, stricken down by disease and cut off by a premature death; tell me, if the first men on earth, when God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul, were so created that necessarily nearly one half of the children born into the world died before they were ten years old, as at present? Enlightened reason rebels against such a conclusion, and sustains revelation when it teaches that man has fallen. That our race from a primitive state of innocence, peace and physical health, has degenerated until the darkness of night has shut out from man's spiritual perceptions, the bright rays of the Sun of Heaven; until selfishness, violence, vice, and sensualism have sapped even the physical constitutions of the inhabitants

of our earth. Evil is not undeveloped good, but the opposite of good, or a perversion of good; nor is falsehood undeveloped truth, but the opposite of truth. Nor are disease and suffering undeveloped health and happiness; for they hold the same relation to health, that evil and falsehood do to goodness and truth; and all progressive increase of disease and suffering, tends towards the destruction of the life of the natural body in the same manner that an increase of evil and falsehood tends to destroy spiritual and heavenly life in man; for disease and suffering hold the same relation to evil and falsehood that effect does to cause. If man was free from sin he would understand more fully the physical laws by which he is surrounded; and what is even more essential, he would be willing to live in accordance with them; for even the brute creation—the horse, the ox, and sheep, cull the life-giving grass from the same field where grows the poisonous plant, and even the young lamb will rarely touch the deadly laurel, except when driven to it to prevent starvation, when the green grass and other vegetation are covered with snow. The animals in the world, when unperverted by man, live in the order of their creation. But man, standing at the head of the animal kingdom, endowed with freedom, and reason to guide him, is found both physically and mentally, or spiritually perverted, and he is constantly suffering, both physically and spiritually, from the consequences, or penalties which follow the violation of natural and spiritual laws. This fact, of itself, should be satisfactory evidence that man is responsible for his acts, and that he is not simply the child of circumstances, therefore irresponsible for his doings.

The child, whom we are striving to educate, has, as we see, a physical body, intellectual faculties, and affections, and they all are parts of one whole, and it is all important, in order that we may realize the highest state of development of which the young person is capable, that each department of his being should be developed in harmony with the rest. A premature development of a part is at the expense of the whole. Of the three great departments of the child's being, I have named, there is far less danger of doing harm by striving to develop the body, and neglecting the faculties of the mind, than there is in prematurely developing the latter, especially the intellect, and neglecting the body, from the fact that the body is the organism, and, as it were, the basis, through and from which we have all the manifestations of mind in this world. If the body is imperfectly developed, deformed, or diseased, through neglect, want of proper training, or violence done to it, it is impossible for the mind ever to reach the stage of highest development of which it would have been capable, in



a well developed body. If the proper development of the physical organism does not take place during the days of childhood and early youth, the chance is in a great measure lost forever; and a comparatively puny and delicate body, and a life-time of suffering and disappointed hopes are almost inevitable. Whereas, if the intellect is neglected during the same period, but a healthy body secured, even although the young man or woman may not know his or her letters at the age of eighteen or twenty years, with industry and perseverance a good practical education can be obtained. If we strive to prematurely develop the intellect of a child by undue mental application, an unnatural flow of blood is directed to the brain, to supply the unnatural activity and consequent waste which is going on in this organ; therefore the rest of the body suffers. Nor is this all, for all premature development of a part is necessarily but an imperfect development of even such part; for this reason, we rarely ever hear of our precocious children in after life as distinguished men or women. How much more important then is the physical education of the child, than the intellectual; and we have but to look around us at the puny, pale-faced, deformed children in our streets, to see how fearfully this most important department of education is neglected. I say *most* important from the fact, that the moral education, which is perhaps the most important of all, is so intimately connected with the physical, as I shall endeavor to show, that the latter cannot be neglected, without almost destroying all good and noble affections, or at least, in a great measure preventing their development.

The intellect of the child is educated or developed by being taught truths by others, and by his learning or storing the memory with various items of knowledge derived from the senses. As the child comes to years of discretion, by reflecting on the treasures thus stored up, the reasoning faculties are developed. But the affections of the child are educated or developed, first, by the manifestations of the affections which he witnesses in the acts of others, especially of parents, teachers and playfellows; second, by his acting out himself the truths and knowledges he may possess; or else acting according to his hereditary inclinations. The intellect of the child, then, is developed by learning and being taught; the affections by doing and seeing done. Of course the child's ability to do, will depend in a great measure upon his possessing a knowledge of how to do; and the true use of knowledge is to teach him how to act and live. Truths and knowledges only become living when we carry them out into act, or when we have an earnest desire to do so, which may unite them with our affections. Until such time they are dead, being alone, and form no

substantial part of our spiritual organism. Learning and doing then, in a true education, must go hand in hand. At least there must be a sincere desire to obtain knowledge for the sake of use hereafter, if not at present, in order for such knowledge to be abiding. Every one must be aware how much more impressive teaching is when the lessons taught are acted out in the life of the teacher, for they then reach the affections. I well remember, while a very young child, following my father through a field, as he was crossing a rill, he accidentally stepped upon a little frog, and crushed him; he felt him beneath his foot, turned around, saw what he had done, and gave a single expression of regret. I do not remember the words, or even a word he used; but the act taught me a lesson which eternity cannot efface—that my father would not cause unnecessary suffering, or do harm to the least of God's creatures; and that I should do likewise—and I am able to see clearly that the influence of that simple act over my subsequent life has been very great. I remember it distinctly as though it were but yesterday; while of the hundreds of sermons and lectures which I heard before, and even for years after that incident, scarcely a distinct vestige can I recall at this day. How different would have been the effect upon his son, if my father had said, in a thoughtless and petulant manner, "I am glad of it; served you right; you might have kept out of the way; there is one less frog in the world."

Truths of science are to the spirit of man, what water is to man's natural body; they relieve intellectual thirst. But as the latter, although a medium through which the body may be nourished, of itself gives no substance to the famishing organs, so simply educating the understanding gives no substance to the spirit of man; and the affections must famish or seek food elsewhere. We would certainly think a parent very unwise who should furnish his child for nourishment simply water, and allow, or even require him to go without or seek more substantial food, to supply substance to his body, elsewhere, as he can pick it up in the streets, alleys, and about the markets, at the risk of getting improper food, or perhaps even poisonous substances. Every one would pronounce such a parent unworthy the name of 'father;' and if he were to build a splendid house, and employ accomplished waiters, and even dispense his water from golden goblets, when one-half the extra expense would supply substantial food, as well as drink, I rather suspect that we should all, without any hesitation, pronounce the man a monomaniac. And yet, we may inquire if he would not be doing better towards supplying natural nourishment for his child, than the parents of our city are doing towards educating, or supplying spiritual nourishment for their children. We have built



splendid schoolhouses and churches, and employed accomplished teachers and preachers, with all the necessary ornamental and useful appliances to tempt the desire for knowledge, and are able to quench the intellectual thirst even until our children are satiated, and become precocious prodigies, so far as the intellect is concerned. But how is it with the nobler part, the affections of the children? What are we doing towards educating the hearts of our children?—towards supplying food as well as drink for their indwelling spirits? Very little, almost literally nothing. Our children are famishing for bread, and we do not heed their cry; or, if we do, we give them little better than stones on which to feed their hungry souls. It is rare that a child has a natural appetite for natural substances, which are poisonous to the physical body; but our children all inherit from their parents an inclination to do evil, therefore we all know that without proper example, and constant watchful care, they will almost necessarily act in accordance with their hereditary inclinations, instead of acting in harmony with the truths stored up in the memory; for such truths, as we have seen, are lifeless until they are united with the affections, or carried out into act by the child; or he sees them carried into life by others. So that we may inquire if the parent that is satisfied with simply teaching his child that which is right, and allows him to run at large for living examples, and to act out his hereditary inclinations unrestrained, is not even more foolish and culpable than the one who provides his child only with water for nourishment! Now we certainly spare no pains to enlighten the understandings of our children; but, alas! of what avail is it, when we allow them to run in the streets, in crowds, and to act out their natural inclinations unrestrained, stimulated on by vicious associates, who set them the example of cheating, swearing, lying, fighting, stealing, and many other evil habits; and when, not unfrequently, such examples are set them by adult men and women? Or when we retain them at home, in our yards, without any associates with whom to develop their affections, to be influenced by the example of servants, who are often annoyed by their presence, and are not over amiable; or, perhaps, are heedless, indifferent, or vicious? Have we a right to expect them to be swayed by the truths which are dormant in their memory, rather than by the living examples, which are in harmony with their hereditary inclinations? Experience certainly shows that we have not; that “evil communications will (even) corrupt *good* manners.” And what are the examples of life, which the child witnesses at home, when he is kept from running at large, and kept from the society of servants? Are parents always able, amid the cares and perplexities of business, and daily duties to

which most parents are too much confined, to set their children such an example of patient forbearance, kindness, and cheerfulness, during every hour of the day, as they desire them to follow? Are they able at all times to watch and see that in their amusements and sports, they always act and do right towards each other? Can parents allow their children always to have proper associates at home, with whom to develop good and kindly affections? and, if they can do this, are they willing to constantly hear the noise, and witness the confusion which must inevitably result from their engaging in proper sports—even necessary amusements? If parents have the virtue to perform and the patience to endure all this, they cannot confine their children, either boys or girls, to their houses, offices, stores or shops, any considerable portion of the time, without preventing the development of and destroying their physical bodies. So that in the present state of society in the cities and villages, especially of our country, where good behaviour among children in the streets is not enforced by police regulations and the watchful care of civil officers, and under our present system of education, the parent's choice lies between confining his child from the light of the sun, air and active exercise, to an extent entirely incompatible with life and health, and thereby seeing his little ones, slowly but surely, going to premature graves, or unnecessarily cut off by the diseases of childhood; or, on the other hand, turning them into the streets to see them morally polluted and destroyed: and even physically destroyed by the vices and follies of after-life. A terrible alternative indeed, and one which has caused me more mental anxiety than any other I have ever encountered in the path of life, and when I reflect that, even in this city of seventy thousand inhabitants, there are not parents enough who seem to care for the present and eternal welfare of their own children, to say nothing of the children of their neighbors, to establish even one school for the physical and moral education of the children of our city, I am sometimes led to inquire what claims we have for being considered a civilized and christian community; while we are permitting even our own children to perish without systematic effort to save them: yea, more, as I shall hereafter show, in not a few ways hurrying them on to destruction. Vain boasting and empty pretensions are nothing; we are what we are, and it is well for us to occasionally examine our true characters, and see whether we are discharging our duties as philanthropists and christians, or are being ourselves destroyed by selfishness, sensualism and vanity. Do you suspect that I have drawn an over-dark picture? Does not all experience show that the population of our cities is only preserved from destruction, by a constant influx from the rural dis-



tricts? What right have we to permit our city to remain, for the want of a proper system of education, one great charnel house for the country, when, as it can be shown, it is entirely unnecessary! Our city is no worse than every city of our land. A farmer, who can have his children with him in his fields, in the open air and light, away from vicious associates, and, as soon as they are old enough to work, can keep them employed at active labor, can, if he is disposed, do something like justice towards giving his boys, and even his girls, if he will take them into the fields or garden, a proper physical and moral education; and during years gone by, they have done this to a considerable extent; but at present, vanity, that vampire upon American society, which, together with its obsequious servant, love of money, is doing so much towards destroying the population of our cities, is carrying devastation and ruin through our rural districts, as I shall point out in future articles. The female portion of the population, in such sections, possess far less vigor of constitution, and physical strength, than was possessed by their grand mothers; and this is true, not only in the United States, but it seems, by the testimony of English writers, that the same is true in England, where of course change of climate cannot be accused, as the cause of the changes. The causes of this degeneracy, both there and here, will be found in the violation of the laws of our being.

Play is to the child what labor, business and amusements are to the adult—the school for developing the physical body and affections, the most important departments of man's nature, as we have seen. I am fully aware that, in this age, intellect is regarded by perhaps the great mass of men, and even women, as first. And if a man is a candidate for an important office of trust under our government, or in our monied institutions, or even for a clerkship in a mercantile establishment, the questions are not, generally, is he good, honest and upright—but is he smart, learned, and can he talk well. And this respect which has been, and is being paid to superior intellect and learning, instead of goodness and integrity, has brought our government to the verge of destruction; many of our railroads and banking institutions to bankruptcy, and multitudes of our merchants to poverty. It is strange that a merchant should be so blind as not to see, that a man who will deceive and take advantage of the ignorance of a customer, will surely not hesitate, when opportunity offers, to take advantage of his employer.

The day has been, when more regard was paid to the heart than to intellect. No one would think of comparing George Washington, so far as intellect, scientific attainments, fashionable polish, and even ora-

torical powers, are concerned, with Aaron Burr. Both alike have completed their course, and have gone to their own. Burr, with all his intellect, scientific attainments, polish and eloquence, died in obscurity; neglected and despised for his many vices. His intellectual lamp went out in moral darkness, and his name can hardly be mentioned before our children. How different with WASHINGTON—a true and good man, who lived a life of usefulness, guided by strict integrity, with affections ever burning for the good of his country—he died the death of the righteous, and left behind him a name which will endure while time lasts, and an example which every parent delights to hold up for his child to imitate. Our nation is now reaping the natural fruits of a system of education which regards the intellect as more important than the affections, and therefore neglects the latter. And what are these fruits, that we need to covet them? Political corruption in high places, unbounded vanity, financial dishonesty, infidelity, and physical degeneracy, prevailing to an extent almost unheard of in the annals of history. Children and men may learn truths in our school-rooms and churches, but they are dormant until carried out into act, and thereby united with the affections, as we have seen. With the adult, the real man is built up, for good or evil, as he carries the truths in his understanding into life, or perverts them, in the external acts of his daily life—in all the affairs of business, labor, family relations, social intercourse and amusements, and works of benevolence. Man's physical body can be sustained in vigor by performing the active duties of adult life, aided, when necessary, by proper gymnastic exercises. But the child is not prepared for the duties of active life, and the playground is his school for the affections, and also for his physical body. And, if we will but stop a moment and reflect, it seems to me that we can but see, that proper teachers here are far more important than are our present teachers in our school houses; especially for children under twelve years of age; and even for those many years older. For it is here that the child, or young person, outside of the family relations, receives his or her first practical lessons of life, for good or evil. It is here that practical lessons can be given, and the child stimulated by example, and the truths taught can be united with the affections and carried out into act, and thereby become immeasurably more abiding than when simply taught in the school-room or church. How important, then, that in all his little games and plays, the child should be taught to be kind and truthful, and required to act, strictly, honestly and justly. To avoid deceiving, cheating, stealing, lying and backbiting or slandering his play-fellows. Also, to restrain his angry passions, and to be kind and cheerful, even under disappointment and de-



feat; or to avoid boasting and self-glorifying when triumphant. Also, to strive to assist and cheer the weak, by gentle words and kind acts, instead of teasing and making sport of them. How all-important, then, are out-door teachers, who shall teach and take charge of the children while at play; watch their every act and word, and see that no improper acts are done, or words uttered, and bestow that attention to the moral education of the young which it is impossible for parents who are engaged in the active duties of city life, to bestow.

Here is an unoccupied field for missionary labor—if our civil government, which is so liberal in providing for intellectual education, will not take it in charge—far more important than can be found on the distant plains of India, or the burning sands of Africa, or the Isles of the Sea. Not that I would have the latter neglected, but the future of the world depends much upon the success of Christianity in our country, and the evil man will sink immeasurably lower here than in pagan lands. What! so zealous to Christianize the poor, ignorant, and therefore comparatively irresponsible Hottentott or New Zelanders, and yet neglecting our own children in our streets, unnecessarily permitting them to perish, not only spiritually but even physically, almost en masse? Strange infatuation! most wonderful neglect of duty!

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

As yet I have only considered the subject in detail, so far as the child's heart is concerned; it remains to take a more deliberate view of the short comings of our present system of education, in regard to the physical development and organization of the natural bodies of our children. Here we shall find, as I have already intimated, that our children are subject not only to the most dreadful neglect, but also the most destructive abuses. Our nation has, without much doubt, sunk lower, in regard to physical education, than almost any nation on the earth.

I have already hastily called the attention of the reader to the importance—even to the mind—of a well developed and healthy body. Rousseau says: "The body must be healthy to obey the soul; a good servant must be strong; the weaker the body the more it encumbers and weakens the soul." He still further remarks: "If you wish to develop the mind of a pupil, develop the power which that mind has to govern, exercise his body, make him healthy and strong,



that you may make him prudent and reasonable." Both Aristotle and Plato required that children should be trained in the bodily exercises of the gymnasium for several years before entering upon their studies, and that such exercises should be continued in connection with their intellectual pursuits. The latter says: "The excess of corporeal exercises may render us wild and unmanageable, but the excess of arts, sciences and music, makes us too trifling and effeminate; only the right combination of both makes the soul circumspect and manly." Never were truer words spoken, and none more important to be heeded by the degenerate sons and daughters of this generation. Rothstein truly remarks, that "we employ a scientific horseman to train a valuable horse, but let the development of the *human* body go." Such is the wisdom, or rather folly, of this day, especially in the United States, a land claiming superior civilization and Christianity; and we are now receiving the just penalties which inevitably follow such neglect of our physical bodies. The careful and intelligent observer can but see, in the palefaced, delicate, nervous, distorted and deformed children growing up around us, abundant evidence that we cannot violate the laws of God, as manifested in creation, with impunity. Cleveland says, in his Essay on the Classical Education of Boys—"It is melancholy, indeed, in our institutions of learning, especially our Colleges, to see so many puny-looking young men; hollow chests, round shoulders, and bending body, are characteristics of our students, and premature old age or consumption carries off but too many of our most gifted men." But yesterday I saw a student from one of the most flourishing Colleges of our country, where congregate from five to eight hundred students. I inquired of him what attention was paid to physical education; although such a question was almost superfluous, for I could have told by the physical appearance of the student then before me. He said that they had no gymnasium; no systematic physical training; some of the students worked some, and they sometimes played ball, and that it was no uncommon occurrence for students to break down, and be obliged to leave on account of ill health.

I inquired what attention was paid to the education of the affections; he replied—"We are taught to keep them in abeyance while pursuing our studies." A teacher might as well attempt to stop the pulsations of the heart as to attempt to prevent the affections flowing forth, either in innocent and useful, or vicious and pernicious acts.

When such a heartless philosophy governs the actions of our teachers, and they are thus reckless as to the physical and moral welfare of their students, and good seed is not sown, and good affections are neither stimulated by example, nor strengthened by being permitted



to flow forth in proper recreations and amusements, under the direction of *living* teachers, is it strange that rank weeds spring forth, in such neglected mental fields as are found in the mental atmosphere of students, who are away from under the social sympathies and restraints of the home-circle? Is it a matter of wonder, that habits of idleness, dissipation and profligacy, are so frequently formed within the very walls of our Colleges; and that parents, in return for the healthy, virtuous, temperate, prudent, and industrious boy they have, under many sacrifices, sent to a literary institution, so frequently received back a feeble, broken down, vicious, intemperate, indolent spendthrift? Students in such institutions are inclined to become listless and indolent, therefore they should be required, as a matter of duty—and this requirement should be imperative—to spend several hours during the middle of the day, in a regular course of active, systematic, physical training, and active amusements—such as will sustain the body and mind in health, and satisfy the demands of both for recreation. Let them thus spend a large portion of their time during the day, and they will be compelled to spend their evenings at their studies, instead of amid scenes of dissipation and folly.

 I have often noticed the grass growing green and thrifty in the small yard which lies in front of one of our city union schools. A few days since I inquired of one of the teachers how it happened that the grass was so green. He very promptly replied. "because we do not allow the children to go on to it, or tread it down." What! in the small yards which surround our public schools, which are not even a quarter large enough for necessary recreation and exercise, the children required to keep upon the narrow walks, and not even allowed to step upon the grass! As though a few square rods of green grass were of more consequence than the physical and moral development, health and lives of the hundreds of children who congregate there for instruction! O, shades of Aristotle and Plato! Are the parents of our city in a Rip-Van-Winkle sleep, or are they blind, or perhaps mad, and consequently reckless in regard to the consequences to their little ones. 

Hufeland advises "to let the child, until the seventh year, pass the greater part of the time in bodily movements and gymnastic games of every kind, and mostly in the open air, for that is most healthy." Yet, in our country, parents do not hesitate to send their children even at the age of four or five years, to school, where they are required to sit still six hours a day on hard benches. To confine a child under

twelve years of age, to the school room six hours a day, is an outrage which should not be tolerated a day. Two or three hours at most is the extent for which such young children should be confined; nor can they be confined a longer time without injury. In the healthy air of the country, where they have a chance for active out-door play in the fields, when out of school, they may stand it for a few months in the year; but not almost the year round. Parents often send their young children to school to get rid of them, and to know where they are, and will even complain if the teacher does not keep the poor restless little creatures there the full period of six hours a day. Yes, parents who are loudest in their complaints and denunciations, if the lecturer or clergyman happens to detain them, by the length of his discourse, more than one hour and a half, once or twice a week, do not hesitate, and that apparently without the least compunction of conscience, to require their poor little children to sit upon hard benches, four times as long, for five days out of the seven; and will even complain if they have not the privilege of doing it on Saturday.

I know, by observation, that adult men and women will complain bitterly, if they are required to sit six hours a day and listen to lectures, with an intermission of five minutes at the end of every hour. Nor can they stand such confinement, without taking particular pains to counteract its effects by active out door or gymnastic exercises. What right have we, then, to suppose that delicate young children, who are growing, and, more than at any other period of life, need exercise, air and light, can withstand such confinement with impunity; and, more especially, when little or no attention is paid to their physical education, out of the hours of imprisonment in the often crowded and imperfectly ventilated and lighted school room? Is it strange that, under such treatment, our children fade and die young, or live to grow up delicate, nervous, dyspeptic or consumptive, men or women? To every one who understands the laws of physical development, it is not strange.

The necessary requisites for physical development and preservation are, a due supply of proper food and drink, wholesome air, light and exercise. Although an imperfect development may take place when these requisites are but imperfectly supplied, still we can never have a robust and healthy organization under such circumstances. Without a due supply of food and drink, the body languishes, or dies for the want of nourishment. If the food or drink is improper or poisonous, it causes disease and even death. Without air man can live but a few moments. If the air contains an excess of poisonous gases, or exhalations, or lacks a due supply of oxygen, debility, disease and



death may ensue ; according to the extent of the change from healthy air. Without the aid of light, vegetable development will not go on to maturity ; and animals and men can only sustain a sickly and imperfect organization, from the fact that they feed upon food which has been already organized, in the vegetable or animal kingdom. Without a due supply of light the skin becomes pale and bloodless, the flesh soft, the bones, especially in children, are imperfectly developed, and are flexible and yielding, instead of compact and solid ; curvatures of the spine and deformity of other bones ensue ; the teeth decay, from the lack of healthy structure, and even the very blood becomes changed, loses its red glöbules, becomes watery, and possesses less vitality than healthy blood ; and the whole system becomes much more liable to contract diseases of almost every kind. The effects, or consequences, which result from a lack of exercise, are very similar to those which we find ensuing from a want of light. With the child but an imperfect organization takes place, the adult becomes and remains puny, the structures of the body soft and liable to disease. If the mind of an individual deprived of exercise is unduly excited, or even excited to the extent a well developed person might bear with impunity, the individual becomes liable to a variety of mental and nervous diseases. It is the harmonious development of both body and mind, in all their parts, which gives health and life in their highest manifestations—a noble, robust, well formed man or woman.

Exercise is not only indispensable for the development and preservation of the body as a whole, but also, it is equally important for the growth and strength of each organ and member of the body ; for even every muscle will grow strong by proper exercise, or weak, delicate and emaciated for the want of it. In the development of the vocal organs of the accomplished speaker or singer, or of the arm of the blacksmith, the leg of the professional dancer, and of the general muscular system of the circus actor, we can see what wonders can be accomplished by the systematic training of parts, or the whole of the muscular system. Even all the senses are quickened by their legitimate use, and the organs through which they are manifested grow strong and vigorous from being used, whereas, if not used, they slowly but surely lose their ability to perform the functions for which they were intended. In some of the fish which swim in the dark waters of the Mammoth Cave there is scarcely a vestige of an eye left ; and in most, or all of them, this organ is very imperfect. Almost every nation on earth has had, and does have, its manly sports and games of strength and skill ; which, although the players are not generally guided by the hand of science, still do much toward developing the

human body, and sustaining symmetry of form. But among many of the nations of antiquity physical exercises were taught, and among some of the nations of Europe to-day, they are taught as a science, and the gymnasium is a necessary part of a school or a college. In no nation is this more important than in the United States; for, after the days of childhood are over, it is almost literally all work, or idleness, and no play; for we here see little attention paid to those athletic games which have saved other nations from destruction. Active physical labor is almost our only dependence for both physical development and preservation, after the child is a few years old. Yet, this is generally entirely insufficient to develop and preserve symmetry of form, as but a portion of the muscles, in almost any occupation are brought into energetic action, therefore, while those grow strong from use, others, from want of exercise, grow small and feeble. For this reason we find that our laboring men, even our active farmers, often grow round shouldered, one sided, or otherwise deformed, and sooner or later diseased. All this may be, and should be avoided by a frequent resort to gymnastic exercises, or active games, which will bring into action the muscles and parts of the body not used during labor. It is wonderful how much can be accomplished towards rejuvenating the deformed, delicate and diseased bodies of even adult men and women, by systematic training in the gymnasium. I can hardly believe my own senses, on witnessing the feats of strength and activity of men who, during years gone by, have visited my office for that relief from debility and disease, which they have now found from the active exercises of these truly important institutions. If the nervous, dyspeptic, delicate and deformed men and women of our city would but spend a couple of hours daily in the gymnasium, the doctors would find fewer patients, and sextons would have more leisure for decorating our cemeteries.

Although our city abounds with delicate and feeble children, who need physical training far more than they do intellectual, still we have not a single gymnasium in connexion with our public schools, nor even a yard, of sufficient dimensions for a play-ground, which the children are allowed to use. Nor is there, to the knowledge of the writer, the least attention paid, in any of our public schools, to this most important part of a true education. Our schools, in this respect, are far behind many of those on the continent of Europe.

Ling, a celebrated Swedish philanthropist, invented a system of physical exercises founded upon scientific principles, the aim of which was to develop equally and perfectly the whole human form; and also to remedy deformity and disease. The advantages resulting from his



method of training were so manifest that he became very celebrated, and was knighted, and appointed at the head of a public institution for preparing teachers to propagate it. His system of physical training was introduced years ago into all the military academies, universities, colleges, town and country, schools of Sweden; and it has been carried into several other European nations, under the authority of their governments. But in the United States, even in this young-fogy City of the Straits, it seems almost impossible to arouse our citizens to the importance of such a system of education, which every one can but know, is much more needed here, especially for girls, than in the old world. Says a writer in the March number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, "It is beyond question, that far more out-door exercise is habitually taken by the female population of almost all European countries than by our own. In the first place, the peasant women of all other countries (a class non-existent here) are trained to active labor from childhood; and what traveler has not seen, on foreign mountain paths, long rows of maidens ascending and descending the difficult ways, bearing heavy burdens on their heads, and winning by the exercise such a superb symmetry and grace of figure as were a new wonder of the world to Cisatlantic eyes? Among the higher classes, physical exercises take the place of these things. Miss Beecher glowingly describes a Russian female seminary in which nine hundred girls of the noblest families were being trained by Ling's system of calisthenics, and her informant declared that she never beheld such an array of girlish health and beauty."

And this even in Russia, while in the United States we are neglecting the physical training of our children, notwithstanding our race is perishing from such neglect. When will our parents, teachers and the superintendents of public instruction, arouse from this fatal slumber, to a sense of their duty to the children of our land? When will our churches arouse, and let their voices be heard in favor of the physical and moral education of our children? Nor is scarcely any attention paid by parents at home to the physical education of their children. They are either allowed to run wild in the streets, or confined in the house, when out of school, secluded from air and light; or in small, often unwholesome yards, without proper instruction, or companions to stimulate them on to physical activity; and yet parents expect their children to be healthy and strong, and are even so short-sighted as to suppose that their little boys and girls will grow up robust, possessing the physical requisites for performing the active duties of adult life, when thus trained. Strange infatuation! A short lived dream! Sad reality beyond!

## PROPOSED CHANGE IN OUR SCHOOLS.

It seems to me that it must be evident to every one who has his eyes open to the effects of our present system of education and training, upon both the physical and moral development of the children of our city and country, that a reform is not only necessary, but indispensable. That we must pay more attention to the physical and moral training of our children, and not crowd the intellect of the child with studies which are only suitable for the adult, at the same time that we are not only neglecting both their physical and moral education, but also doing violence continually to both the body and the affections, or the heart.

How shall such a reform be brought about? We are already spending our money freely for the support of our schools, which are little better than prisons and the rack for our little children, as their delicate pale faces and slender bodies abundantly demonstrate. We are now spending tens of thousands of dollars towards building splendid houses, to make room to confine all the little children in our city six hours a day to hard benches; thereby we are making ample provision for the destruction of the rising generation. Let us see what could be done with even less money, towards a harmonious and true education, which would preserve multitudes of our little ones from an untimely grave, or an adult life of debility and suffering; or of dissipation and crime. I think I speak within bounds, when I say, as a medical man, (and nine-tenths, if not every one, of the most intelligent and observing physicians of our land will bear witness to the truth of my statement,) that no child between the years of four or five and twelve can be safely confined in the school-room at diligent study and recitation, more than two hours a day—one hour in the forenoon and one in the afternoon; and that, if the rest of the time is devoted to physical and moral training in the open air, thereby developing a strong and healthy body, in which can dwell a vigorous mind, the child would actually learn more in the two hours, than he now does even in the six long—and I well remember how tedious—hours required by our present system. I also think I am safe in asserting positively, that no young person between the ages of twelve and twenty, the period of life during which the child becomes a man or woman, and both the human body and spirit undergo the most important change which takes



place during life—can be confined with safety in the school-room more than three, or at most four hours a day ; and that, if they do not acquire any more, or even quite as much, intellectual knowledge, the physical development and strength, and moral instruction, which would be received from proper out-door exercises and teachings, would far overbalance any defect in intellectual acquisitions ; and leave the young person with a capacity for future intellectual attainments, such as the boy or girl can never have under our present system ; for the intellects of our children are stunted by precocious development, like the pear engrafted upon the quince. Our ablest men and women are those who are longest in arriving at maturity, as a general rule. Parents and teachers are too anxious to crowd the intellects of children, to be able to make them show off, without reflecting that comparative mental imbecility must inevitably result from this course. If children could have all necessary exercise, recreation and amusements, at school, in the open air, during daylight, and not be confined in doors more than two or three hours during the day, they would need neither vacations nor Saturdays for recreation and contamination ; and they would be, physically and mentally, satisfied to spend their evenings at home, and would have the physical strength and energy, and might be required with safety, to spend a reasonable share of their evenings at their studies ; so that they would be able to accomplish as much, intellectually, with perfect safety, as they do at present with the destruction of health and the hazard of life. Upon the supposition that one-half of the children in our city, who are attending our public schools, are under twelve years, if they were required to spend but two hours a day in the school-room, and the older half but three or four hours, the average would be three hours or less, so that, by varying the hours of attendance, it will be seen that our present school houses would accommodate about twice the number of pupils they can under our present system. Now, to meet the wants of the increasing number of scholars in our growing city, who are and will be seeking accommodation in our public schools, instead of building more school houses, let us purchase, or rent, in the vicinity of our present houses, play-grounds, and erect proper gymnastic fixtures in the open air and sun, for pleasant weather, and in cheap buildings for stormy and very cold weather. This will not cost anything like as much as it will to build houses, such as we are now building, to accommodate the same number of children. Having done this, let us keep the young children two-thirds of the time they are now in the schools, out doors, and the older children one-half, or at least one-third of the time. This in our large schools, will materially relieve the teachers in-doors, even if the sam<sup>e</sup>

number of recitations are heard ; as the time now spent in restraining the natural restlessness and playfulness of the children, will be saved, so that one or more of the teachers can be spared to teach the children out doors how to use their muscles, limbs and body, so as to develop a symmetrical form ; or correct any tendency of a part to deformity or disease, by bringing into activity the weak muscles, and relaxing the strong, thereby saving our children from being afflicted with round shoulders, distorted spines, narrow chests, and small waists ; also from the multitude of diseases to which these deformities predispose. And, if the teachers in our school-rooms were all to qualify themselves for teaching the children out doors, in necessary physical exercises and graces, and should alternate in out-door exercises and teaching, the poor, anxious, elongated countenances, which we so frequently witness among our teachers, would soon give way before the bright rays of the sun, fresh air, and regular, active, systematic exercise, and we should soon see in our school rooms men and women physically worthy of being the teachers of our children—strong, robust, natural colored and healthy ; and all this without adding one cent to the expense we are now paying for the education of the children of our city. And the same is equally applicable to every city, village and hamlet of our land. In the city of London they are forming societies for the purpose of providing play-grounds, not only for children, but also for adults.

I now propose to consider some of the immeasurable advantages which would result from the proposed change in our schools.

Such a change will tend to cultivate a love for active social recreation and amusements among our children, girls as well as boys, which will tend to keep the heart warm and kindly, instead of selfish, vain and penurious when the child becomes an adult.

I have made the following selections from different parts of an excellent editorial article in the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, for March 1856. The entire article is well worthy of being republished in every religious paper of our country : “The nation is morbid—physically, mentally and morally—and something must be done for its health and social life.” The writer, after alluding to the evidences that our people are physically deteriorating, and making quotations from the New York Times, and also from Miss Catharine Beecher’s book to the same effect, goes on to say : “We must express our sincere belief and regret that the statements as to the deteriorating physical condition, both of the men and women of the country, are true. The main causes seem to us to have been over-work, over-anxiety and



want of exercise." In regard to exercise, the writer says: "Exercise will not and cannot be taken profitably as a mere matter of duty. A solitary walk or ride is a very imperfect method of reaching the object in view. See how boys take exercise. They need a large quantity of it, and they invent a thousand active sports. What genuine boy ever thought of the necessity of exercise in playing ball or skating, with half a hundred of his fellows? This is nature's own prompting; the duty of exercise is to be laid aside, and some pleasurable motive is to excite it.

"The Grecian games," says the writer, "have not been looked at sufficiently in the light of a grand contrivance of that wonderful people for promoting the health, agility and beauty of their people." After giving a sketch of these games he says, "At such immense pains was Greece to train her free citizens to health and vigor! Where are our Olympic games? And where is our substitute for them? Exercise, in the American mind, seems to be connected with vice, and only allowable when business or labor, to make money, requires it. It is a Herculean task to get a little exercise, and public sentiment puts down everything like amusements that lead to it." After noting the prejudice which exists against students, clergymen and others engaging in certain amusements and games, he exclaims: "It will not do, fellow citizens. These things must be altered. The stamina of the country will give way under it. A healthful development of chest, flesh and muscle, is becoming more and more rare. Americans are becoming remarkable for their irritable nerves and excitable brains." After noticing the lack of amusements and the improper kinds of amusements now in vogue, and the consequences which follow, the writer says: "Now we stand between the living and the dead, and ask if there is no remedy for these things? Is this the outcome of our puritanism? Is this young and mighty nation to fall by its own inward moral corruption, and are the strong, the wise and the good to stand looking calmly on until they perish in the ruins?" The writer subsequently responds: "No; we are wrong in America. The conscience of the country is murdering the choicest men in it. It refuses to allow the conditions that are essential to health and social happiness; it brings its purest and best to premature graves or to insane hospitals, and it drives multitudes who would be sober and respectable men, under any tolerable system of social life, into extravagance and dissipation. In formally making over social enjoyment to the worldly and wicked in America, we greatly err; it is a thing that never was done for any length of time in any country; for even in Scotland, among Presbyterianism of the strictest forms, there is far more social life and

organized society than amongst us. For our part we lay this matter upon the conscience of the church, and upon the good sense of the American people. We have told them the evils of the present system as plainly as we could find language to do it with ; and if they will not listen to us we cannot help it."

The following sensible remarks from the same article should be heeded by all : " We suppose that the playful and social tendencies in man were implanted as a relief from the more grave and intense duties of life, and that the attempt to treat him as a being who does not possess these faculties, or does not need them, is to be wiser than God, and that the result will always be the same, that the attempt to improve the divine teaching and institutions will show itself sooner or later to be not only a failure, but one fraught with the most dangerous consequences. We need hardly remark, that any attempt to make that which should be a mere recreation the main business of life, must necessarily result in folly and misery. The man of pleasure is proverbially a miserable and vicious man."

The article from which the above extracts are taken, is a notice of a Memoir of the Rev. Sydney Smith, and is thirty-eight pages in length. I do not know that it can be obtained in a form separate from the journal in which it is published. The general circulation of this article, in a tract form, among " professed christians," would, in my opinion, do more for the salvation of our country, than all the tracts, to the unconverted, which have been published by the American Tract Society for the last ten years ; for, let the professedly christian portion of the community be converted to the importance of doing their duty, others seeing their good works would glorify our Father in Heaven. But while they are destroying their own children by their neglect and improper treatment of them, as must be manifest to every observer, and are countenancing, and even requiring a neglect of " the conditions that are essential to life and social happiness " to an extent that " is murdering the choicest men " of our country, what right have they to expect that their appeals to the non-religious portion of the community will be heeded ? What right have we to expect that their converts, when made, will be any better than they are ; and, if the men and women of our churches are training their children for premature graves, and are freely, as I shall hereafter show, following practices and habits, to some of which allusion has been made in the extracts above, which are slowly but surely destroying our race physically, have we any assurance that they are not being also destroyed spiritually ? Do obedience to the Divine commands, and a life which leads to Heaven, tend to destroy men, women and children, and even



races physically? No! "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land." "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell thereon forever." "For evil doers shall be cut off."

I am told by one of our citizens, who is a native of Scotland, and has recently visited his native land, that in that country they have schools to which quite young children are sent, not to be confined to hard benches, nor to sit still and study, but to play in the open air, under the watchful care of a matron, and to be amused and instructed by the aid of pictures, &c.

If we only had proper play grounds and gymnasiums in connection with our schools, under the care of proper out-door teachers, where the parents of our city could send and leave their little children over two or three years of age, knowing that they would be carefully watched and cared for, and have suitable exercise and amusements in the open air and light of the sun, with proper, or well-behaved play-fellows, what a relief would it be, especially to mothers who are worn out with constant care, anxiety and watchfulness, in taking care of their little, and even older children. Many a mother, from this cause alone, is hurried to a premature grave, leaving her children to the care of others. And with what a light heart might fathers go to their daily labors, if they knew that the physical and moral training of their boys and girls were thus cared for while they were absent, instead of their running wild in the streets, or being cooped up in the house or yard, deprived of those indispensable requisites for developing healthy bodies—light, air, and cheerful exercise. And how much better would it be for society if not a child was allowed to make the streets his home, or if children were not allowed to congregate in our allies, back yards, vacant lots, and outskirts of the city, to teach each other, unrestrained, all sorts of evil habits, or to lead one another on in doing wrong.

At present, we have not a few children in our city whose parents are vicious and dishonest, and not only teach them to lie, cheat, beg, steal, swear and fight, but also set them the example in all these evil habits; so that such children do these things, scarcely knowing them to be wrong, and are therefore comparatively innocent; yet the good and virtuous citizens are compelled, either to shut up their children, or to let them run in the streets in contact with such, whose example will almost necessarily be much more potent than home teachings. Nor is this all: it is much more injurious for a child who has been taught better, to do these evil acts, than it is for the ignorant; therefore, the children of the Christian portion of the community suffer far greater injury than others. I have shown in a former article that it

need not cost our city any more, or even as much, to furnish all the children within our limits proper amusements, and physical and moral training, than does our present school system. I now propose to show that we should, indirectly, save thousands of dollars in money by educating our children thus for a life of usefulness and virtue. Notwithstanding we are a professedly religious community, we can, without any hesitation, neglect the poor children of our city, allow them to grow up surrounded by evil example and teachings, under the most perverse circumstances, trained, perhaps even by parents, to petty thefts and crimes, until they are ten or fifteen years of age, and have had little or no better teachings or example, during their entire lives, when we can cheerfully spend our money to fee, and can find officers to detect them in their crimes against this society which has so unjustly neglected their moral training, we can pay prosecuting attorneys, judges and juries, for convicting them ; we can build workhouses, jails and prisons, to confine them, and we can, without any scruples of conscience, disgrace and confine these poor, outcast, neglected children, who have not yet arrived at years of rationality, in such houses and prisons, often with old offenders, to be taught how to accomplish more desperate crimes. No lack of money to do all this, even when by the aid of a proper school system, which would have respect to our children as physical and moral beings, as well as intellectual, and would not cost as much as we at present pay for the schools of our city, a large portion of the immense sums paid for the support of officers, jails and prisons, could be dispensed with, for the want of criminals upon whom to exercise our benevolent faculties. Yes, even the professed followers of the Lord, who has taught us to train up children in the way they should go, and to do good to all, can freely spend their money to build splendid churches, and fine houses, at an extravagant cost, and dress in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, at the very moment when Lazerus, in the form of the neglected children of our city, lies at our gates full of physical and moral sores ! I have no objection to the building of nice churches if we can afford it ; that is, if we can do it without neglecting other duties. Large houses are but little better than prisons, in which our women and children are now being destroyed by thousands, by being deprived the necessities of life—air, light, and active out-door, or even in-door exercise. Extravagance in dress, and useless display, it would seem, are untimely and unbecoming in the followers of Him who taught that it is our duty to love our neighbors as ourselves, when even our neighbor's children are clad in rags, and their physical and moral training remain uncared for ; when less than one-half of the



money and time spent in useless display and extravagance, would supply their wants, and train up the children in our midst for an active life of usefulness, virtue and happiness, instead of permitting, and even almost driving them into habits of idleness, vice, dissipation and crime, and consequent violation of the laws of physical health, resulting in a premature death, or a life of suffering in this world, and unhappiness, perchance, in the world to come.

Another important advantage which would result to the child from a system of physical and moral training such as has been named, would be the cultivation of habits of obedience. Until the child's rational faculties are developed, the will of the parent, teacher or guardian should guide him ; and nothing is more destructive to both the natural and moral life of the child, than to allow him to act out his natural and hereditary inclinations unrestrained. The child is not only injured thereby, but he soon comes to cease to reverence his parents and teachers, and treats them with contempt ; and he soon begins to exalt himself above others, and becomes jealous and contentious. Every day's observation, even aside from man's nature, satisfies me, that few things are more essential for the future well-being of our children, and our own happiness, than that with a steady hand, we teach our children the duty of obedience, and require them to obey and respect our commands. I have never known a disobedient child to become a kind and affectionate husband, wife or even parent. Above almost everything else, both boys and girls should be taught that they have before them a life of usefulness--of active labor ; and that they are not to be drones in the world, eating up the proceeds of other men's labors, and that all useful labor is honorable. No man or woman can enjoy health of body or mind, or be happy, or permit those around to be, who does not occupy some field of useful labor.

How important, then, is a well cultivated mind in a well developed and healthy body. Children, while young, should be taught to engage in active, athletic plays or sports, for the purpose of developing their bodies, against the time they are able to perform active, useful labor. Having before them lives of industry, children, as soon as old enough, should be made to work ; and it is very desirable that, as far as possible, the employment should be such as will bring into activity all parts of the body, or all the muscles. As this can only be imperfectly done, the child, or young person, should have seasons of active play, which will not only relieve the natural desire for recreation, but also give the necessary exercise to the parts of the body not used during labor ; that a healthy, harmonious development of the whole organization may be the result.

While active labor is almost indispensable for physical development, it is as important that the young and growing organism should not be over taxed, by excessive labor, as it is that it should not be dwarfed by idleness. Industrious habits should be cultivated as a matter of duty, and conscience.

*Immel*  
The physical and mental training, as we have shown, should go on hand in hand, and the young boy or girl thus educated, will grow up with a well developed body and cultivated mind, prepared, physically, and above all morally, to play well his or her part in the drama of active life. The child thus trained escapes many of the temptations, and consequent vices, which are the inheritance of the idle; and has physical, intellectual, and moral stamina, unknown to your hot-house plants. Such should be the training of the young, and in harmony with it should be the habits of the middle aged and the old.

How different from all this is the present method of bringing up children, especially girls. Children, to-day, are not allowed to be children, and to engage in active sports, such as are indispensable for properly developing the "physical" organism. They will soil their clothes, and will not always look trim. Then girls will not be genteel, and feminine, if they are allowed to run and play, jump and dance, and act out the overflowing life which is seeking to be manifested in the body. As for work, do mothers in fashionable society, generally set their daughters to work? No. Idleness and uselessness and consequent delicacy, ill-health, and premature old age and death, are strangely preferred for their daughters, to an active life of industry and usefulness, which will develop and sustain healthy and substantial bodies, and give long life. Is there no need of a reformation—of a LIVING Cristianity, which shall ultimate itself in life? Such only can save our American people from physical destruction. Is there even a remnant that can be saved? Time will tell the story, and a future historian will write it out.